

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ACDE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00
NSCE-00 USIE-00 ERDA-05 AF-10 ARA-10 CIAE-00
DODE-00 EA-07 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 IO-13 L-03
NASA-01 NEA-10 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OIC-02 SP-02 PA-01
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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9054

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 MOSCOW 9055

DEPT PASS TO NSC, ACDA, DOD, JCS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, XO, UR

SUBJECT: US-SOVIET WORKING GROUP ON INDIAN OCEAN ARMS
LIMITATIONS: RESTRICTED MEETING JUNE 23

SUMMARY:

MENDELEVICH PUSHED HARD IN JUNE 23 MEETING ON EXCHANGES OF INFORMATION AND ATA AND ARGUED THAT BASES WERE "KEY ISSUE" IN TALKS. ON DATA EXCHANGE HE LISTED FOUR SPECIFIC CATEGORIES FOR WHICH SOVIETS ARE PREPARED TO GIVE FIGURES (INCLUDING SHIP-DAYS AND TON-DAYS). ON ISSUE OF BASES HE ARGUED THAT ONES OWN BASES PROVIDE NECESSARY "INFRA-STRUCTURE" FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING AND RAPID BUILDUP AND THAT THEY ARE A POLITICAL PROBLEM IN IO AREA AND, THEREFORE, SHOULD BE ELIMINATED. HE ALSO GAVE DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF DIEGO GARCIA AND BAHRAIN. IN HIS REMARKS WARNKE EMPHASIZED NEED TO FOCUS ON LEAST CONTENTIOUS ISSUES FIRST AND ARGUED FOR FREEZE AT PRESENT LEVEL OF ACTIVITY, ENDING COMPETITION AND MOVING TO LIMITATIONS IN STEPS. HE ALSO REPLIED IN GENERAL TERMS

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ON BASES COMPARING US FACILITIES TO SOVIET ONES, PARTICULARLY BERBERA, AND FINALLY HE SUGGESTED THAT JUNE 24 MEETING ADDRESS QUESTIONS OF GEOGRAPHIC AREA, NAVAL ACTIVITIES, AND OTHER RELEVANT ELEMENTS AND THAT JUNE 25 MEETING RETURN TO BASES AND ISSUE OF DATA. END SUMMARY.

1. MENDELEVICH OPENED THE RESTRICTED MEETING BY EMPHASIZING SOVIET DESIRE TO COMPARE FACTUAL INFORMATION AND DATA WITH RESPECT TO BASES AND MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA. HE SUGGESTED THAT SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSIONS ADDRESS SIMILARITIES AND COMMON ELEMENTS IN OUR CONCEPTS.

2. WARNKE RESPONDED BY REVIEWING US POSITION ON FOUR POINTS: A) THAT THE QUESTION OF SUPPORT FACILITIES USED RATHER THAN THE QUESTION OF WHOSE BASES ARE IN THE AREA SHOULD BE PRIMARY; B) THAT THE US DOES NOT BELIEVE PROGRESS CAN BE MADE BY DISCUSSING POSSIBLE TYPES OF BANS ON NAVAL FORCES IN THE AREA; C) THAT IT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO HAVE A REASONABLE DEFINITION OF THE AREA IN ORDER TO DISCUSS THE OTHER ISSUES RELATING TO FORCE PRESENCE; D) THAT THE US CONSIDERS THAT FORCES AND ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE INDIAN OCEAN ARE NOT PERTINENT SINCE THEY ARE DESIGNED FOR PURPOSES AND ACTIVITIES UNRELATED TO THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA. THEREFORE, HE SUGGESTED THAT THE TALKS FOCUS ON THE MILITARY ACTIVITY PRESENTLY EXISTING IN THE AREA AND THAT WE AGREE TO FREEZE THAT LEVEL OF ACTIVITY IN ORDER TO AVOID AN ESCALATING MILITARY COMPETITION WHICH WOULD ONLY WORSEN BILATERAL RELATIONS.

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3. MENDELEVICH, CITING THE VANCE-GROMYKO TALKS IN MARCH, STATED THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE TALKS IS TO DISCUSS BASES, MILITARY PRESENCE, AND THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA AND THAT WE SHOULD IMMEDIATELY TURN TO "IDENTIFICATION OF THE FACTS" AND AVOID THEORETICAL DEFINITIONS. HE ADDED A STRONG STATEMENT IN FAVOR OF COMING TO AN UNDERSTANDING "NOT ON A MINIMUM COMMON DENOMINATOR" BUT ON A MAXIMUM AREA OF AGREEMENT IN OUR TWO APPROACHES IN THESE TALKS. HE COMMENTED HOWEVER THAT THERE WERE TWO POINTS WHICH REQUIRED CLARIFICATION AND PROCEEDED TO CHARACTERIZE SOVIET MILITARY BASES AS BEING "VERY FAR REMOVED" FROM THE INDIAN OCEAN, WHILE THE US HAS BASES "VERY CLOSE TO THE AREA." HE ALSO INSISTED THAT THE QUESTION OF ALLIED PRESENCE "MUST BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT" AND PROCEEDED TO ARGUE THAT THE SOVIETS HAD NO ALLIES IN THE AREA.

4. MENDELEVICH THEN LISTED FOUR REASONS FOR CONSIDERING BASES AS "THE KEY ISSUE" IN THE DISCUSSIONS. HE CLAIMED, FIRST, THAT THEY PROVIDE A STABLE SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR NAVAL AND AIR FORCES,

I.E., AN INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA
FOR SUCH FORCES. SECONDLY, THAT FACILITIES ALLOW
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIC PLANS AND INTENTIONS
WITHOUT HAVING TO ADJUST TO FIT SOMEONE ELSE'S
FACILITIES. THIRDLY, BASES ALLOW FOR "RAPID
BUILDUP" OF FORCES NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT
MILITARY OPERATIONS. FINALLY, HE NOTED THAT
MILITARY BASES IN THE AREA GIVE RISE TO SHARPLY
NEGATIVE REACTIONS ON THE PART OF CERTAIN STATES
IN THE AREA AND CAUSE TENSIONS WHICH WOULD NOT
BE PRESENT IF THE BASES WERE NOT THERE.

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DEPT PASS TO NSC, ACDA, DOD, JCS

5. WARNKE RESPONDED BY ARGUING THAT WE MUST
STOP THE COMPETITION AND LIMIT AND REDUCE FORCES IN
THE AREA BY STEPS. THAT THE BASIC ISSUE THEREFORE
WAS WHAT STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN FIRST AND WHAT
PRIORITIES SHOULD WE HAVE IN SCALING DOWN OUR
ACTIVITIES AND PRESENCE IN THE AREA.

6. MENDELEVICH SUGGESTED STARTING WITH AN EXCHANGE
OF DATA WITH RESPECT TO SHIPS PRESENT IN THE AREA
AND INDICATED THAT THE SOVIETS BELIEVE THAT "TON-
DAYS" IS THE MOST RELIABLE METHOD FOR EVALUATING
SHIP PRESENCE. HE SAID HE WAS PREPARED TO EXCHANGE
ON A RECIPROCAL BASIS DATA IN THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES
(EACH ONE DIVIDED INTO WARSHIPS AND AUXILIARIES):
1) THE ENTIRE NUMBER OF SHIPS PRESENT IN THE INDIAN

OCEAN IN 1976; 2) THE NUMBERS OF THESE SHIPS
PRESENT "PERMANENTLY" AND "TEMPORARILY"; 3) THE NUMBER
OF THE SHIP-DAYS OF ALL SHIPS; 4) THE NUMBER OF TON-DAYS
OF ALL SHIPS.

7. MENDELEVICH CLAIMED THAT THE "MOST REALISTIC"
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EVALUATION IN SOVIET OPINION WAS THAT OF TON-DAYS
BUT TO SHOW FLEXIBILITY THEY WERE WILLING TO EXCHANGE
DATA ON SHIP-DAYS. AMBASSADOR WARNKE INDICATED THAT
WE WERE NOT IMMEDIATELY PREPARED TO EXCHANGE DATA
ON THIS POINT AND SUGGESTED WE RETURN TO THE ISSE
ON SATURDAY.

8. MENDELEVICH THEN SAID IN THE TIME REMAINING HE
WOULD LIKE TO BEGIN AN EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON
BASES AND PROCEEDED TO DESCRIBE DIEGO GARCIA AND
BAHRAIN WITH DETAILS OF THE SIZE AND NATURE OF US
FACILITIES (COMMENT: HIS INFORMATION APPEARED BASICALLY
TO COME FROM ALREADY RELEASED US DATA.)

9. MENDELEVICH THEN REASSERTED THAT THE SOVIET UNION
HAS NO BASES OF ITS OWN, NOR ANY WHICH IT CONTROLS IN
THE INDIAN OCEAN WHICH CORRESPOND TO THE AMERICAN
BASES OF DIEGO GARCIA AND BAHRAIN. HE ALSO SUGGESTED
THAT THERE WERE OTHER BASES "OF YOUR ALLIES" WHICH
US USES AND WHICH HE WOULD ADDRESS AT SOME LATER
POINT.

10. AMBASSADOR WARNKE REPLIED BY DESCRIBING OUR
FACILITIES ON DIEGO GARCIA AND BAHRAIN IN GENERAL
TERMS AND NOTING THAT WE CONSIDER THE SOVIET USE
OF BASES AT BERBERA, SOMALIA, UM QSAR, AND ADEN
TO MORE THAN OFFSET THE RATHER LIMITED FACILITIES
WHICH THE US USES AT DIEGO AND BAHRAIN. HE STATED
THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO DISCUSS OVERALL USE OF THE
FACILITIES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN WITH THE SOVIETS
BUT WE WILL NOT SIMPLY DISCUSS DIEGO GARCIA AND
BAHRAIN. HE SUGGESTED THAT WE RETURN TO THIS
QUESTION IN THE SATURDAY MEETING.

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11. MENDELEVICH CLOSED THE MEETING BY SUGGESTING
THAT THE JUNE 24 PLENARY MEETING DISCUSS "SEVERAL

CONCEPTUAL ASPECTS" SUCH AS IDEAS REGARDING THE ADJACENT AREAS AND THE PRACTICAL FACTOR OF ALLIED PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. WARNKE RESPONDED THAT WE WOULD WISH TO EXPAND ON THE BASIC CONCEPTS

WHICH WE HAVE OUTLINED REGARDING GEOGRAPHIC AREA,

NAVAL ACTIVITIES, AND OTHER RELEVANT ELEMENTS.

12. AMBASSADOR WARNKE ALSO RAISED THE RADIO MOSCOW ANNOUNCEMENT (STATE 145047) WHICH HE SAID DOES NOT CORRESPOND TO THE AGREEMENT WHICH WAS REACHED ON HANDLING PRESS ANNOUNCEMENTS REGARDING THESE CONSULTATIONS. MENDELEVICH, SOMEWHAT TAKEN ABACK, ASSURED US SIDE THAT HE WOULD IMMEDIATELY LOOK INTO THE MATTER AND THAT HE WAS COMPLETELY CERTAIN THAT NO INFORMATION OTHER THAN THE AGREED PRESS RELEASE WAS MADE AVAILABLE DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY BY THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. HE SUGGESTED RADIO MOSCOW WAS USING PRIOR PRESS GUIDANCE BASED ON STATEMENTS BY SECRETARY GENERAL BREZHNEV AND NOTED THAT THE 10 AM GMT TIME OF THE BROADCAST OCCURRED BEFORE THE END OF THE JUNE 22 LUNCHEON AND COULD NOT THEREFORE BE ATTRIBUTED TO A LEAK FROM THE SOVIET DELEGATION.
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